

# NEWS RELEASE

Indiana Criminal Justice Institute



## Communications Division

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## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 12, 2008

### Patrols Beefed Up for Turkey Day in Indiana

*Indiana Law Enforcement Promotes Safe Family Travel for the Thanksgiving Holiday*

**Indianapolis, IN.** – Indiana Criminal Justice Institute (ICJI) Executive Director, T. Neil Moore today announced that more than 250 state and local law enforcement agencies will step up seat belt patrols, impaired driving patrols, and speed enforcement in order to prevent senseless tragedies from occurring on Indiana's roadways this Thanksgiving holiday season. The Thanksgiving holiday period runs from November 21<sup>st</sup> at 6 p.m. through November 26<sup>th</sup> at 6 a.m.

The statewide *Safe Family Travel* Operation Pull Over enforcement blitz will begin on Friday, November 14, and will conclude on Sunday, November 30. This effort will consist of Indiana law enforcement officers working thousands of overtime hours day and night to ensure that motorists travel safely on the state's roadways.

"Traditionally, Thanksgiving is one of the most heavily traveled times of year and this year will be no exception," said Moore. "Many Hoosiers will travel long distances in passenger vehicles to visit with family and friends during this time and Indiana law enforcement officers are committed to making sure these families reach their destinations safely."

Last year in Indiana, 20 percent of all fatal collisions were speed related. Ten people were killed in traffic crashes during the 2007 Thanksgiving holiday period alone; 20 percent of those deaths were alcohol related. In nearly one-half of the fatal collisions that occurred around Thanksgiving in 2007, the person killed was not wearing their safety belt.

Nighttime is a more dangerous time on the road because seat belt use is shown to be lower. Of the 266 nighttime passenger vehicle occupant deaths that occurred nationally during the 2006 Thanksgiving holiday period, more than one-half (138) died with their seat belts unfastened (where seat belt use was known).

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"Safe Family Travel"

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[www.in.gov/cji](http://www.in.gov/cji)

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Daytime seat belt use is slightly higher, still nearly half of those killed during the daytime hours were unrestrained. Studies from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) consistently show that wearing a seat belt increases one's chances of surviving a crash by more than 60 percent.

"In addition to being mindful of nighttime hazards, we also want to encourage motorists to stay alert and to be aware of unforeseen road and weather conditions that can literally change over night during this time of year," Moore added. "With each enforcement effort we must take a proactive approach towards improving traffic safety, as the goal is never to write tickets, but to save lives by deterring impaired and dangerous driving behaviors through high-visibility enforcement."

*"Safe Family Travel" is a statewide enforcement effort that is funded with federal dollars awarded to Indiana from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA). The effort encompasses seat belt and impaired driving initiatives. To further publicize this effort, ICJI will launch a paid statewide television and radio media flight promoting "Click It or Ticket" and "Over the Limit Under Arrest" from November 12-25.*

*The Governor's Council on Impaired & Dangerous Driving serves as the public opinion catalyst and the implementing body for statewide action to reduce death and injury on Indiana roadways. The Council provides ongoing support to state and local traffic safety advocates.*

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